

ARBITRARY FUEL STANDARDS COST JOBS—DON'T SAVE ENERGY

(Mrs. MILLER of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER of Michigan. Madam Speaker, 30 years ago, Congress established CAFE standards to lower our dependence on foreign oil. And the cost? Hundreds of billions of dollars to comply with the regulation, hundreds of thousands of auto jobs lost, and dependence on foreign oil has gone up over 100 percent.

CAFE has not worked. It's an antiquated model, and we should be pursuing new technologies instead. But Democratic leaders are pushing even more stringent CAFE. Democrats are telling auto companies to produce more hybrids and other unprofitable vehicles to comply with new regulations.

A recent JD Power survey shows consumer demand is dropping for hybrids, forcing costly incentives to move these expensive vehicles. Even Honda is discontinuing its Accord hybrid because of poor sales.

If we worked with the domestic auto industry to develop leap-ahead technologies and make them affordable for all consumers instead of overregulating, we could achieve breakthroughs to reach our goals and to protect American jobs, but instead, the Democratic leadership has made a conscious decision to bankrupt Michigan.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Madam Speaker, when the Democrats won control of Congress in November, we committed to raising the minimum wage for the first time in 10 years and to provide tax relief to our small businesses.

Today's increase in the Federal minimum wage marks a concrete step that this new Congress is taking to provide greater opportunity and prosperity for all working Americans. The considerable small business tax relief that was passed along with the minimum wage increase reflects a broader American agenda to expand our economy and give small businesses more room to grow and succeed. This relief includes allowing small businesses larger tax reductions, making it easier to expand and provide better services, and specific relief from the AMT.

I am proud that the State of New York has already been a leader in providing workers with a living wage, and the raise that goes into effect today will put our businesses in New York on a level playing field with the rest of the country.

HONORING MARYVILLE INTER- MEDIATE SCHOOL SIXTH GRADE WIND ENSEMBLE BAND

(Mr. DUNCAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a fine group of sixth graders from my district in Tennessee. The Maryville Intermediate School Sixth Grade Wind Ensemble Band from Maryville, Tennessee, is headed to Chicago for the prestigious 2007 Midwest Clinic, an international band and orchestra concert.

The event is known in band and orchestra circles as one of the highest honors a musical group can receive. They were chosen to participate only after an extensive audition process in which they competed against other bands and orchestras from high schools, communities, colleges and universities and militaries from around the world.

This is certainly a great achievement in and of itself. But the Maryville band is special in another way; they are the first sixth grade band in the Clinic's 61-year history to be invited to participate. It is an honor that the close-knit community of Maryville can be proud of, and just another example of the incredible spirit of the people of east Tennessee.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I urge my colleagues to join me as I salute Maryville Intermediate School's Wind Ensemble Band and its directors, George Hayden and RoAnn Romines, on this much-deserved accomplishment. I wish them many more musical scores to come.

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. WILSON of Ohio asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WILSON of Ohio. Madam Speaker, today, for the first time in a decade, America's minimum wage workers are getting a pay raise.

The minimum wage increase would never have happened had not congressional Democrats made it one of their top priorities when we came to Capitol Hill at the beginning of this year.

During our first 100 hours, House Democrats passed this much-deserved pay raise with the support of 82 congressional Republicans. As health care and groceries and energy and housing costs skyrocket for the average consumer, for many years these needs were ignored for millions of Americans.

And every day the minimum wage was not raised, it lost its value. As a matter of fact, the minimum wage was at its lowest level in inflation-adjusted terms since 1955. This is simply not fair, and that's why the new Democratic Congress has made increasing the minimum wage one of its top priorities. And with this increase today, Madam Speaker, Democrats are deliv-

ering on the promise that we made to the American people.

PROVIDING A SECURE ENERGY FUTURE

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, we must find ways to be less reliant on foreign supplies of oil and gas. And this is more than an energy issue; this is a national security issue. We cannot be beholden to our enemies for our energy supply. But the good news is we're making progress domestically to find a diverse energy supply using alternative energy sources.

South Carolina, which is becoming a front-runner in alternative energy for the Nation, received \$1 million to fund cellulosic ethanol process development. These funds will support a bioethanol project that Clemson University, SC Bio, Savannah River National Lab and the Queensland University of Technology collaborated on using novel technology.

The time is now to provide a secure energy future for generations to come. And fortunately, we are working domestically to ensure that ethanol technology here at home is a permanent fix to solving our dependency on foreign energy sources.

MILITARY FAMILIES AND THE MINIMUM WAGE

(Mr. BUTTERFIELD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, today, many American families will finally receive a long overdue pay raise when phase one of the Federal minimum wage increase takes effect.

It has been 10 long years since American workers have seen an increase in the Federal minimum wage, the longest gap in the history of the law. Over that decade, inflation has all but erased the effect of the last increase, leaving millions of families, including military families, struggling to survive.

Currently, Madam Speaker, 10 percent of military spouses earn between \$5.15 and \$7.25 an hour. These 50,000 military families are part of the nearly 13 million Americans who will benefit from the Federal minimum wage increase that takes effect today.

Madam Speaker, increasing the minimum wage is just one part of a broader American agenda to strengthen the economy and help working families. Democrats believe that all Americans, not just the privileged few, deserve to make a living wage.

I am proud that we passed this legislation, and especially glad that it will help so many of our military families.